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SUBJECT: US CONSULATE GENERAL SAO PAULO UNDERGOES CRISIS
MANAGEMENT TRAINING ACTIVITIES

REF: FSINFATC 2585

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - PLEASE PROTECT ACCORDINGLY

11. (U) SUMMARY: Selected staff of the U.S. Consulate General Sao Paulo participated in crisis management training on December 6, 2007 and a mission wide Digital Video Conference (DVC) crisis management exercise on December 14, 2007. Observations and recommendations, keyed to reftel para 2, A-H, follow in the cable body. END SUMMARY.

12. (U) On December 6 and December 14, selected staff of the U.S. Consulate General participated in crisis management training and exercises led by an FSI trainer via DVC. Post thanks FSI for this opportunity to review procedures and practice emergency scenarios. After the training, participating staff members remarked on the value of the training and discussed how to implement new best practices that emerged during the discussions.

13. (SBU) A. The Consulate believes that the DVC format was very effective and the amount of time (approximately two hours on the first day for CMT Overview training and 3 1/2 hours for scenario run-throughs on the second day) was sufficient and appropriate for mission wide coordination. However, in order to stimulate more post specific interaction and team building more deliberation time after each scenario would be beneficial.

14. (SBU) B. All scenarios presented were timely and relevant, ConGen Sao Paulo liked the wide range of scenarios and that many were specific to current events or potential situations specific to Sao Paulo and Brazil such as the possibility of an Avian Influenza outbreak and civil unrest as a result of violent prison uprisings.

15. (U) C. The controller was effective and was very helpful in answering all questions as they arose and maintained an appropriate pace to complete the scenario in the allotted time. All participants were actively engaged when their expertise or knowledge was needed.

16. (SBU) D. The Consulate staff feels that the training was useful and with the training personnel has made assessments on how to react in a real crisis. The Marine House will be activated as the Alternate Command Center (AC). Post EAP is due to be renewed in April 2008. CEPA training was held on January 23, 2008. CEA will allow all sections access to read and update the unclassified EAP online. Post did take note that all sections should participate in updating their section of the EAP and that the current tripwires need to be

reviewed and updated mission wide. The consulate staff learned many lessons which highlighted certain improvements that post will now work to remedy. The Avian Flu tripwires will be updated, in coordination with Embassy Brasilia, and the procedures on Tamiflu distribution will be evaluated. The new Marine House will be made ready to serve as an alternate command post with the addition of sufficient supplies and computer lines to serve all necessary entities at post during an emergency and to allow access to the newly created "portals" that have been established. The Consular Section and RSO will refine a protocol to disperse all waiting visa applicants in case of emergency.

17. (SBU) F. Post feels that the addition of the Portals on the internet are a great new asset to assist with communication and the sharing of information during a real crisis situation. Technical problems did arise with the portals but were fixed shortly after the training session. Tripwires will be updated with input from posts mission wide. All section heads will review Emergency Action Committee (EAC) roles with their staffs. Post will reconvene its Avian Flu Working Group, which will coordinate with the Embassy Avian Flu Working Group.

18. (U) G. Post feels that the current schedule of CME training, once every two years, is appropriate. Most mid and upper-level officers serve three or four years in Sao Paulo. The current schedule allows for more recent arrivals to undergo training, building on the previous training given to officers of longer tenure. Post RSO will contact CM when new threat and crime trends develop prior to the next visit, so that new scenarios can be added to upcoming training sessions.

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19. (U) H. Post felt it was helpful to get input from the Consulate Staff in order to create the scenarios for the exercise. Post recommends that funding be provided to send one or more consulate staff (American and FSN) to the Foreign Service Institute for advanced crisis management training. A likely candidate could be an American employee newly arrived at post assigned to a three year tour and/or an FSN of long-standing tenure (5-7 years) who has shown leadership potential.

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